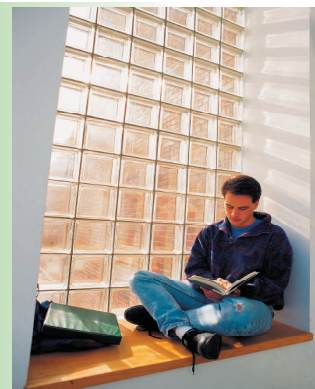


CRN Rhode Island's Career Resource Network News Corner

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Support for Academic and Career Counseling Programs



Career Development Strengthens Education Reform

Education is in the news, and not all of the news about education is good. Criticisms and suggestions for improvement abound, and come from many sources, from the perspectives of both the education system and the quality of the labor pool and its effect on business and the economy.

The testing program, which is a part of No Child Left Behind, generally shows slight improvement, if any, in test scores. The socioeconomic level of a community seems to be related to the quality of its schools, in spite of efforts to provide a quality education in all communities.

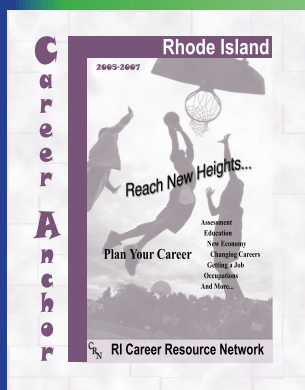
In addition to academic achievement as reflected in test scores, critics point out such problems as the substantial number of students who are frequently absent or tardy and do not complete a high school education. Today, it is generally assumed that some type of postsecondary education is essential to attain a reasonable standard of living, but many graduates do not continue their education/training. Of those who do, many do not complete the selected postsecondary program.

Business leaders complain that they can get plenty of applicants for jobs, but have difficulty in finding applicants with the required skills. They are primarily talking about the SCANS skills. Writing simple but understandable paragraphs, accurately using basic math, and communicating with customers and co-workers are cited as essential skills. The list continues with critical thinking, responsibility, self-discipline, planning, time management and other employability skills needed by workers at all levels and in all occupations.

Comments of postsecondary educators are not unlike those of business leaders. Colleges report that entering students cannot handle freshman algebra or language arts, so they have to provide basic programs to raise student skills up to entry level.

Career education can contribute to the improvement of this situation. A quality career development program helps students (or adults) develop a clear career goal and a plan to reach this goal. This program will provide them with a focus so that they are likely to be "on task." Although research is scarce, there is some indication that students or adults who participate in a quality career development program will have improved attendance and a higher level of academic achievement. They are more likely to complete high school and go on to further education or training, and to complete that program. They are also likely to demonstrate the employability skills desired by employers.

2005-2007 Rhode Island Career Anchor



The 2005-2007 edition of the Rhode Island Career Anchor is now available. The contents are generally similar to the previous edition, with updated information, particularly related to occupations and postsecondary options. Quantities have been distributed to all high schools and many government and nonprofit organizations by members of the Rhode Island National Guard.

If you would like a single copy or a small quantity, send an email to crn@dlt.state.ri.us. You can view or download the entire publication on the CRN web site at www.dlt.ri.gov/crn/anchor.htm.



Training was offered in the summer and fall of 2005 for all games in the Real Game Series except Get Real. Additional training will be scheduled in the spring if there are sufficient requests.

In view of the uncertain future of Career Resource Network funding after this school year, schools and organizations that wish to use the Real Game Series are advised to plan to acquire training before June and to advise the CRN of their needs as soon as possible.

Play Real Game Project

Seven elementary schools in Rhode Island took advantage of the offer from America's Career Resource Network Association (ACRNA) to receive a free Play Real kit and training in exchange for an assurance that the Play Real Game will be implemented during this school year and that feedback will be provided. Participating schools are Edward S. Rhodes School and John W. Horton School (Cranston); Ashton School, B. F. Norton School, Cumberland Hill School, and Garvin Memorial School (Cumberland); and Potter-Burns School (Pawtucket).

Computer Assisted Career Guidance

Training

Training for Choices and other programs in the RI Career Information Delivery System (CIDS) is scheduled as follows:

Thursday, January 26	Career Futures (install on server, for middle school)
Tuesday, February 14	Choices Planner (Internet-based, for high school/ adult)
Thursday, March 3	Choices CD (install on server, for high school/adult)

Each workshop is from 8:30 to 3:00. Participants will earn Professional Development credit. Details and registration forms may be accessed from www.dlt.ri.gov/crn/cids.htm.

Paws in Jobland: Career awareness for elementary students!

The award-winning Paws in Jobland is now online! Oriented to career education standards for elementary students, Paws enhances career awareness and self-discovery, arousing students' curiosity to learn more about themselves and the people in their neighborhood.

Try the online demo at www.bridges.com/pawscp. The program is no longer available on a CD.

Occupational Focus:



Video Game Creators

We know that people will be happier and more successful working in an occupation that they love. We also know that video games are very popular among young people (and sometimes older people). The professional literature in education and business has included articles suggesting that these disciplines could gain much from adopting some of the video game technology and applying it in education, business, and other non-game fields.

Persons who are interested in writing, music, art, or computer science may find rewarding work in video game development or a related field. Video games are generally not created by individuals. They require a team of persons who contribute their unique skills and knowledge to the creation of a finished product.

To get a feel for what goes into a game, select one and play it for sheer enjoyment. Then play it again and concentrate on the details. Try different options. Take notes on how the game flows. Make a chart showing the results of the various options.

Several skills are needed. Writing is one of the key skills. Writing the game content is similar to other serious writing, including fiction and drama. Another key skill is composing music for games. And, of course, persons with art and technical computer skills are needed to make the written story and music "come to life."

Skills and desire may be as important in the video game field as education, but a good basic education is important. Writing, musical, and computer skills are important, but so is understanding the popular culture and the motivation of persons who may be playing the game. In preparing products for use in business or education it is necessary to have a solid background in that field.

Students who wish to get into the video gaming industry should have a solid, well-rounded education, and learn as much about games and the video game industry as possible. There are now some post-secondary programs in game design. Obtaining a job may require more networking than many other occupations.

Although game writers may not become wealthy, there is an opportunity for a good income.



What's New in the CRN Corner?



The CRN receives dozens of news briefs of interest to career educators each week. Check the CRN web site for weekly Career Development News.

CareerOneStop provides a wealth of information for career planning and job seeking. It includes America's Career InfoNet, America's Job Bank, and America's Service Locator. CareerOneStop is improved regularly with added or updated features. A newsletter, **Connections**, is prepared four times a year to inform users of new developments and ways to get more from the site. The current issue highlights the Career InfoNet web site, the new InDemand Magazine for youth, the new Workforce Credentials Information Center, and the Hurricane Recovery Services web site.

www.careeronestop.org/Newsroom/ViewCOSUpdates.asp

Good Jobs and Careers: A new brochure wheel developed by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Good Jobs and Careers: What Communities Need to do to Train and Move Low-Income, Low-Skilled People into Good Jobs and Careers, summarizes the key components necessary to implement a successful workforce initiative. It identifies what communities need to do to train and move low-income, low-skilled people into good jobs and careers.

www.aecf.org/initiatives/fes/goodjobs/index.htm

In Demand—Connecting Today's Students with the Careers of Tomorrow explores careers in a different high growth industry. It will provide students as well as guidance counselors, parents and teachers with interesting and relevant information about career opportunities, education and the skills needed for various jobs. It offers resources to explore careers and tips about how to help students build successful futures.

www.careervoyages.org/indemandmagazine-main.cfm

The Link between High School Reform and College Success for Low-Income and Minority Youth written by Dr. Monica Martinez and Shayna Klopott, provides an in-depth review of school reform research that presents evidence of college preparation for all students. The report examines predictors of college-going behavior, how these predictors have been addressed within high reform efforts, draws out models from existing reform initiatives, and makes recommendations. Four key practices that contribute to the success of low-income and minority high school students in college are discussed. These are:

- access to rigorous academic common core curriculum;
- prevalence of personalized learning environments;
- balance of academic and social support; and
- alignment of curriculum between various levels.

www.aypf.org or www.pathwaystocollege.net

Career Development Learning Standards:

A comprehensive research report from the National Training Support Center (NTSC) will be distributed to CRNs and Guidance Supervisors in the coming weeks. The report focuses on what defines a rigorous career development learning standard. The report comparatively examined standards in several existing state programs, and linked these standards to existing No Child Left Behind academic requirements. It also provides guidance on a development process for creating standards as well as looking at policy and implementation issues on developing standards. The report will be available from the CRN when it becomes available. Watch the CRN web site for an announcement.

Technology Shapes Emerging Careers:

Technical developments and social changes are combining to create new careers for savvy job seekers. Workers on the cutting edge of career trends could find themselves working as sleep technicians, information destroyers or pharmacokineticists.

www.newsday.com/business/ny-bzcov084578376jan08,0,1678464.story?coll=ny-business-headlines

Career Technical Education (CTE) State Profiles have been posted on the Career Tech web site. These profiles provide statistics on CTE programs; information on funding levels; a snapshot of the differing roles state directors assume; and a brief highlight of high school reform efforts and the role of Career Clusters within each state.

www.careertech.org/reference/states/stateInfo.asp

Teen Business Link from the U.S. Small Business Administration helps teens identify ideas for businesses they could start, find a mentor, write a business plan, start a business, meet other entrepreneurs in their community, and protect their business idea, product, or name. It also includes information about the benefits of owning a business, legal issues, and insurance.

www.sba.gov/teens

Upcoming Events...

Feb. 2, 2006	Groundhog Job Shadow Day www.jobshadow.org
Feb. 14, 2006	Choices Planner training – www.dlt.ri.gov/crn
March 2, 2006	Choices CD training – www.dlt.ri.gov/crn
March 17, 2006	Improved Career Decision Making www.dlt.ri.gov/crn
April 28, 2006	RISCA Spring Conference – www.riscassoc.org
June 24-27, 2006	American School Counselor Association Annual Conference – www.schoolcounselor.org

Check the CRN web site, www.dlt.ri.gov/crn for updates

A Web Site Worth Surfing:



www.dlt.ri.gov/ried



Labor Market Information recently launched the latest version of RI RED, an interactive Research and Economic Database, on the web at www.dlt.ri.gov/ried. This new version allows users to create custom profiles, update and match their skills to occupations, find training programs from RI schools and to compare data between areas, industries, and occupations. It also features refined search capability which allows customers to target potential jobs at local job boards and from employers, by radius around a zip code, and by date of posting. Information on RI RED is updated as it becomes available.

Like the prior version, RI RED contains three modules: Services for Individuals, Services for Employers, and Labor Market Analysis. Each module contains data designed for the particular user. The new version also has a direct link to LMI Publications. RI RED now uses fly-out menus for easier navigation through these modules and contains in-depth integration with links to the Department of Labor and Training, Labor Market Information, and other outside web resources.

We invite you to peruse the redesigned RI RED web site. If you have comments, questions or suggestions, please contact us at lmi@dlt.state.ri.us.

Training Notes

Improved Career Decision Making (ICDM) - The CRN will offer the one-day Improved Career Decision Making (ICDM) workshop on Friday, March 17. The announcement and registration form may be viewed or downloaded at www.dlt.ri.gov/crn/icdm.htm. This workshop was originally developed by the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC) for career educators in all settings, including schools, higher education, One-Stop centers, and nonprofits. The goal was to inform participants of the wide variety of resources available from the US Department of Labor and the RI Department of Labor and Training. It has recently been expanded to include a case study to explore how a career facilitator can consider multiple aspects in working with a student or client. It also includes information on the many resources available from the Career Resource Network. It is necessary to have a minimum of ten and a maximum of twelve persons registered for ICDM. Therefore, it is recommended that those interested register as far in advance of the training date as possible.

Career Development Facilitator Instructor - We are fortunate to have a national leader in Career Development Facilitator (CDF) training available to conduct this extensive training program in Rhode Island. Other persons interested in becoming a CDF Instructor may get information including requirements from the web site of the National Career Development Association (NCDA) at <http://ncda.org>. Click on "CDF Instructors."

Disaster Photos CD - One goal of career education is to prepare for unanticipated events which affect career plans, including disasters. Units in the Real Game Series and other materials present disaster scenarios for this purpose. Teachers across the country have reported that most students have little or no understanding of the magnitude of a true disaster or the effect such a disaster may have on careers. The Mississippi Career Resource Network has made available to us a CD with Hurricane Katrina photographs and background music. The program takes approximately 13 minutes if used in its entirety. It is available from the CRN by request.

Do you have comments or suggestions on the contents of our CRN News Corner? Do you have information you'd like us to publish? If so, please contact us at:

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